been closed, as it says, Yea, when I cry and call for help He shutteth out my prayer.[5] But though the gates of prayer are closed, the gates of weeping are not closed, as it says, Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; keep not silence at my tears.[6] Raba did not order a fast on a cloudy day because it says, Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through.[7]

R. Eleazar also said: Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, a wall of iron has intervened between Israel and their Father in Heaven, as it says, And take thou unto thee an iron griddle, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city.[8]

R. Hanin said in the name of R. Hanina: If one prays long his prayer does not pass unheeded. Whence do we know this? From Moses our Master; for it says, And I prayed unto the Lord,[9] and it is written afterwards, And the Lord hearkened unto me that time also.[10] But is that so? Has not R. Hiyya b. Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: If one prays long and looks for the fulfilment of his prayer, in the end he will have vexation of heart, as it says, Hope deferred maketh the heart sick?[11] What is his remedy? Let him study the Torah, as it says, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life;[12] and the tree of life is nought but the Torah, as it says, She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her![13] — There is no contradiction: one statement speaks of a man who prays long and looks for the fulfilment of his prayer, the other of one who prays long without looking for the fulfilment of his prayer.[14] R. Hama son of R. Hanina said:

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Our Rabbis taught: Four things require to be done with energy,[16] namely,

Whence do we know this of Torah and good deeds? Because it says, Only be strong and very courageous to observe to do according to all the law:[17] 'be strong' in Torah, and 'be courageous in good deeds. Whence of prayer? Because it says,

yea, wait thou for the Lord'. Whence of worldly occupation? Because it says, Be of good courage and let us prove strong for our people.[18]

But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me.[19] Is not 'forsaken' the same as 'forgotten'? Resh Lakish said: The community of Israel said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of the Universe, when a man takes a second wife after his first, he still remembers the deeds of the first. Thou hast both forsaken me and forgotten me! The Holy One, blessed be He, answered her: My daughter, twelve constellations have I created in the firmament, and for each constellation I have created thirty hosts, and for each host I have created thirty legions, and for each legion I have created thirty cohorts, and for each cohort I have created thirty maniples, and for each maniple I have created thirty camps, and to each camp[20] I have attached three hundred and sixty-five thousands of myriads of stars, corresponding to the days of the solar year, and all of them I have created only for thy sake, and thou sayest, Thou hast forgotten me and forsaken me! Can a woman forsake her sucking child ['ullah]?[21] Said the Holy One, blessed be He: Can I possibly forget the burn-offerings ['olah] of rams and the firstborn of animals[22] that thou didst offer to Me in the wilderness? She thereupon said: Sovereign of the Universe, since there is no forgetfulness before the Throne of Thy glory, perhaps Thou wilt not forget the sin of the Calf? He replied: 'Yea, "these "[23] will be forgotten'. She said before Him: Sovereign of the Universe, seeing that there is forgetfulness before the Throne of Thy glory, perhaps Thou wilt forget my conduct at Sinai? He replied to her: 'Yet "the I"[24] will not forget thee'. This agrees with what R. Eleazar said in the name of R. Oshaia: What is referred to by the text, 'yea, "these" will be forgotten'? This refers to the sin of the Calf. 'And yet "the I" will not forget thee': this refers to their conduct at Sinai.

THE PIOUS MEN OF OLD USED TO WAIT AN HOUR. On what is this based? — R. Joshua b. Levi said: On the text, Happy are they that dwell in Thy house.[25] R. Joshua b. Levi also said: One who says the Tefillah should also wait an hour after his prayer, as it says, Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto Thy name, the upright shall sit in Thy presence.[26] It has been taught similarly: One